

CMHC/Nova Scotia Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing 2014-2019

Year 2, 2015-16, Reporting on Outcomes

Introduction

In 2011, the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation, now called Housing Nova Scotia, entered into the Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing 2011-14 (IAH Agreement) with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The funds available under the IAH Agreement are cost-shared equally by the federal and provincial governments. Under this agreement Housing Nova Scotia invested approximately \$61 million to improve the living conditions of over 7,400 low-income households in need by improving access to affordable housing that is sound, suitable, and sustainable. Creating or preserving affordable housing is fundamental to the quality of life and well-being of the individuals helped and having an affordable place to call home builds stronger communities.

The IAH Agreement was extended for five years in 2014. The five-year extension involves \$102 million in cost-shared funds. Recognizing that governments must be accountable to the public for the use of public funds, one of the terms of the agreement requires the provinces and territories to report publicly every year on established expected outcomes and performance indicators that illustrate how they invested the funds over the past year. This report is an account of how Nova Scotia invested the affordable housing funds in Year 2 of the 5-year extension.

Most recently, the federal government in its February 2016 budget announced, the Social Infrastructure Fund which will double the funding available under the IAH Agreement for 2016-17 and 2017-18. This represents an additional \$21.4 million, each year, to invest in affordable housing across Nova Scotia to help reduce the number of households in need. These new funds will also be cost-shared equally between the federal and provincial governments.

What we accomplished in 2015-16?

Details on our investments in 2015-16 are set out in the following table. We committed more than \$21 million to help 2,655 low-income household in need access affordable housing that is sound, suitable and affordable. An additional \$1.9 million was leveraged through contributions from our partners -- private sector developers. These leveraged funds helped to reduce the development costs of new rental housing and rental preservation projects. A map at the end of the report shows the communities and areas where we made these investments.

The IAH funds were invested in helping low-income households in need -- families, seniors, persons with disabilities, vulnerable individuals, and victims of family violence. These investments also help to sustain communities across the province by improving access to affordable housing options and creating local employment and skilled training for apprentices.

How we made a difference in the lives of low-income households in Nova Scotia

The province has a long history of helping low-income homeowners with needed health and safety related home repairs. In 2015-16, 1,087 homeowners received help with needed home improvements to ensure that they have a safe place to call home. Needed improvements included, for example, installing new roofs and windows, upgrading faulty electrical and plumbing systems and dealing with crumbling foundations. See figure 1 below.

Keeping seniors and individuals with disabilities in their own homes

Nova Scotia has the highest rate of disabilities in the country, 18.8%, and ranks second after New Brunswick, 19.4%, in the percentage of the population that is at least 65 years of age. Housing Nova Scotia invests in programs to help these individuals continue to live independently in their homes that

Housing Nova Scotia Investment in Affordable Housing 2014 - 2019 Outcomes and Results¹ - 2015-2016

	2014-15	2015-16
Outcome 1 Reduce the number of households in need by improving access to affordable housing that is sound, safe, suitable and sustainable	2,520	2,655
Number of households in need	2,396	2,511
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes preserved through major health and safety related repairs 	1,072	1,087
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors or persons with disabilities helped by health and safety related repairs or home adaptations that will enable them to continue to live independently in their own homes and communities 	1,041	986
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable rental units created through new construction and repair 	59 (7 projects)	101 (6 projects)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable rental units preserved through rehabilitation and repair 	52 (9 projects)	44 (14 projects)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters for victims of family violence upgraded through needed capital improvement² 	202 (13 projects)	293 (16 projects)
Outcome 2 Increase the resources available to address housing needs of households in need by encouraging contributions by others, including the private and not-for-profit sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funds leveraged from partners to reduce development costs 	\$1.2M	\$1.9M
Outcome 3 Foster a more holistic approach to addressing poverty by supporting a broad range of programs ³	94	144
Outcome 4 Reduce demand for services and institutional living by increasing and extending independent living for seniors in need and persons with disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors or persons with disabilities helped by health and safety related repairs or home adaptations that will enable them to continue to live independently in their own homes 	1,041	986
Outcome 5 Improved accommodations for victims of family violence by providing access for safe, sound, suitable, secure and accessible housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters for victims of family violence upgraded through needed capital improvements² 	202 (13 projects)	293 (16 projects)
Outcome 6 Foster training of skilled labour by supporting apprenticeship in the residential housing sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New rental and rental preservation projects that will be hiring apprentices⁴ 	N/A	N/A

¹ The information in this table is provided in accordance with Housing Nova Scotia's annual reporting commitments to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation under the Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing 2014 - 2019.

² This involves beds/self-contained units. Note that individual shelters may have received assistance for more than one improvement project over the course of the year.

³ This outcome reports on the number of rent supplement unit subsidies funded by Housing Nova Scotia for emergency shelter providers in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

⁴ Number of approved new rental and rental preservation projects that will be hiring apprentices during project construction. Tracking did not begin until April 1, 2016.



Figure 1- Before and after pictures of upgrades made to a home. Exterior repairs included new siding, eaves troughs and new screen door.

are healthier, safer and more accessible. (Source - Statistics Canada, 2012 Canadian Survey on Disabilities and July 1, 2016 Populations Estimates.)

Over the past year, 986 seniors and persons with disabilities received help with needed home repairs and home adaptations. Typical home repairs were new roofs, and upgrading electrical, plumbing and heating systems. Home modifications included improving accessibility by installing ramps to access the home and replacing bathtubs with walk-in-showers. In some instances, Housing Nova Scotia has installed a bathroom downstairs and together with converting a downstairs room into a bedroom a senior or a person with disabilities with limited mobility can live on the ground floor. These adaptations can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those receiving assistance.

Rental preservation

In 2015-16, Housing Nova Scotia partnered with 14 landlords/developers to make 44 existing affordable rental units safer places to live. The units provide affordable housing options in existing neighbourhoods close to services. The largest project was in Port Hawkesbury and involved 12 units.

New affordable housing

In the past year, we committed funds for 6 projects that will create 101 new affordable rental units. Two projects are converting non-residential buildings into affordable housing – one is an old warehouse in New Glasgow and the other an old Legion Hall in Shelburne. The latter will create 12 units, two of which will be barrier-free units. This development will have an impact on affordable housing options available in the Town as currently Shelburne has few purpose-built apartment buildings. Of the 6 projects funded this year, the largest is a ten-storey mix-use development in Downtown Dartmouth that will include 45 affordable rental units.



Figure 2 – Under the Rental Rehabilitation Assistance Program, we partnered with a landlord to upgrade 3 affordable rental units. New siding and windows were installed and exterior porches and stairs were replaced.

The six projects, two conversion projects and four newly built projects, include 9 affordable barrier-free units. The four newly built projects will be built to provincial visitability standards where feasible. Exceptions include two or more storey buildings without elevators where the no-step entry for upper storey units cannot be met. VISIBLE units incorporate the basic universal design elements – no step

entrance, wider doorways and hallways, appropriately placed electrical outlets and light switches and reinforced bathroom walls to facilitate installing grab bars.

Assistance to vulnerable Nova Scotian households

Every year we invest in capital improvements to upgrade the affordable housing options for victims of family violence. This past year we funded 16 renovation projects that improved the living conditions and affordability of transition housing facilities that involved 293 beds/self-contained units.

IAH funds are also invested in providing more stable affordable housing options for homeless individuals or individuals at risk of homelessness. In 2015-2016, we funded subsidies for 144 rent supplement units. As of March 31, 2016 this included 13 units to support the Halifax Housing First Project. The remaining units were allocated to organizations who provide housing or find long term housing in the private market for individuals transitioning from emergency shelters or for other individuals at risk of homelessness. These organizations also help the individuals' housed access support services in the community to help them make the transition to more stable housing. Under the rent supplement arrangements, the tenant pays a rent based on their income and Housing Nova Scotia pays the landlord the difference between what the tenant pays and market rent for the area.

Housing Nova Scotia is committed to breaking the cycle of homelessness and helping vulnerable individuals find a stable home. Two homelessness related initiatives are clearly making a difference – a Halifax Housing Support Worker Program and the Halifax Housing First Project.

- Housing Support Worker Program - In 2011 we introduced a Housing Support Worker Program, that is fully funded by the province, which provides emergency shelter providers with funds to hire a housing support worker. This is augmented by IAH funding for rent supplement units to support these workers. In 2015-16, the program helped to house approximately 300 individuals. Since 2011 the program has successfully supported the transition of 2,150 individuals into long term housing options.
- Halifax Housing First Project - In 2015-16, we partnered with the Halifax Housing and Homelessness Partnership and the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia, to open a Housing First Project. Housing Nova Scotia is funding subsidies for up to 50 rent supplement units. "Housing First" is a model that is being used to address homelessness by providing homeless individuals or individuals at risk of homelessness with immediate access to long term housing in conjunction with support services. It has repeatedly proven to be a very effective intervention for those who continually struggle with homelessness.

The project is targeting those individuals who are the most chronic and repeat users of emergency shelters. Support services are being funded under the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy and these are being provided by the North End Health Clinic through a mobile outreach street



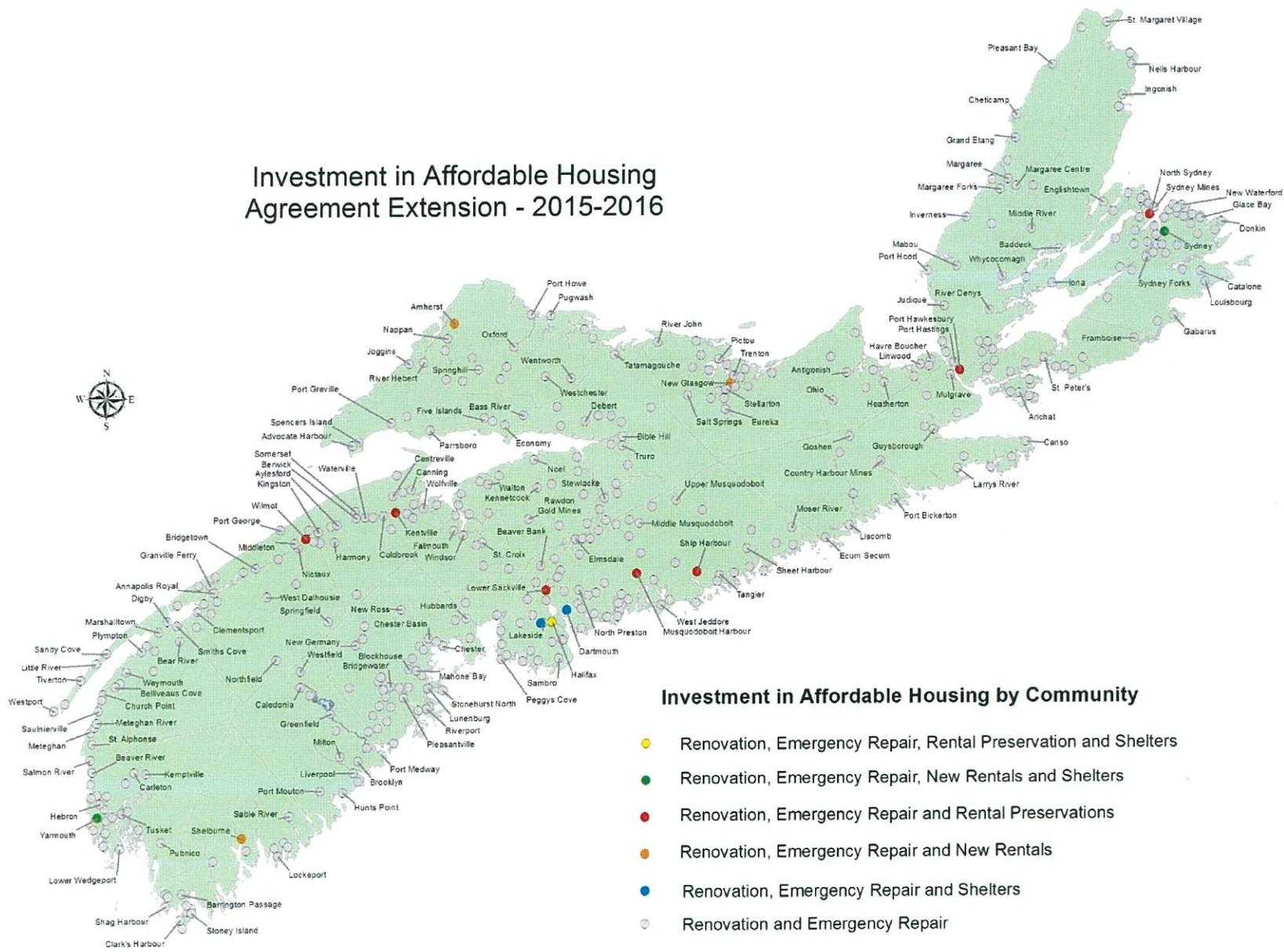
Figure 3 – Port Hawkesbury - We are partnering with a developer to preserve an existing boarded up 12-unit apartment building. Without our investment, it is likely that these units would have been removed from the rental market place.

health unit. The project opened its doors in January 2016 and as of September 2016, 28 rent supplement units have been funded and delivered. The individuals housed have a combined 216 years of homelessness.

Foster training of skilled labour

To support apprenticeship in the residential housing sector, we will be adding an apprenticeship component to our project profiles. We use these profiles to evaluate funding requests for new affordable rental housing and rental preservation developments. The new profile component will ask developers to indicate whether they will be hiring apprentices during project construction. The component went into effect April 1, 2016.

Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement Extension - 2015-2016



Investment in Affordable Housing by Community

- Renovation, Emergency Repair, Rental Preservation and Shelters
- Renovation, Emergency Repair, New Rentals and Shelters
- Renovation, Emergency Repair and Rental Preservations
- Renovation, Emergency Repair and New Rentals
- Renovation, Emergency Repair and Shelters
- Renovation and Emergency Repair